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ADDRESS

TO

THE TOWN CRIERS OF
RHODE ISLAND

BY

HOWARD ELLIOTT,

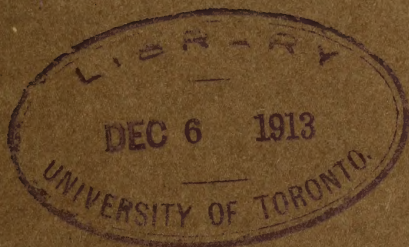
Chief Executive Officer

of

THE NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN AND HARTFORD

and

NEW ENGLAND TRANSPORTATION LINES.



CHURCHILL HOUSE,
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND,

October 29, 1913

Mr. Toastmaster and Members of the Town Criers Club of Rhode Island:

The last and only time that I passed a day in Providence was in the spring of 1878 when I came here with the Harvard Freshmen Baseball Nine and played the Brown Freshmen. I played shortstop and if I remember aright made two base hits. I hope the good people of Providence will not lay it up against me when I say that in that particular game Harvard beat Brown!

I little thought then that I should ever be here in a position to work with you in trying to build up the business and the country of this state,—which though small in area, is large in enterprise and productive capacity. My family spent several summers at Jamestown where so many people from the Mississippi Valley come to enjoy the attractive summer climate. I have sailed many times in beautiful Narragansett Bay and in the summer of 1894, the boat in which I was sailing a race in Newport Harbor capsized as did five others in one of the worst summer storms that ever visited this coast. So you see that I have had some experience in Rhode Island! I thank you for having me as one of your guests to-night and thus giving me the pleasant experience of meeting some of your people, many of whom I shall hope to know better.

I shall hope that I can now and then make a "base hit" for Providence and for Rhode Island; that the progress of the state will never come to a "short stop," and that the storm which has been blowing about the transportation machine of New England will not capsize it to the great detriment of the crew and the people they are trying to serve.

Gatherings like this afford opportunities helpful to all for discussing the business problems in which we are mutually interested, and which we must endeavor earnestly to solve to the advantage of all if we are to prosper. It is from such opportunities for learning to know one another that must come that co-operation, by which the workings of the great machinery of business may be co-ordinated and without which the solution of those problems imposed by the growth and expansion of the nation is impossible. It is only by understanding one another's problems that we can get that harmony of interest, which must always be the foundation of true progress.

Of that dauntless soul, who settled at the headwaters of this beautiful bay in 1636 it is related that his first words to the Indians upon landing were, "What cheer, friends." In the same spirit do I, coming here from that great country west of the Mississippi, where so much that is made in Rhode Island finds a market and where thirty-three years of my life have been spent, greet you as friends and say, "What cheer," or perhaps translated for the question of the hour, "What can we do to help one another."

TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY In common with agriculture, fishing, mining and manufacturing, transportation is one of the primary forms of business.

In the New England transportation machine, which I represent, in its welfare and efficiency, Rhode Island, of necessity, has a most vital interest. Density of traffic, rather than distance traversed, is an important test of transportation efficiency. The severest test that can be imposed on the transportation machine is that which comes from a large and industrious population gathered within narrow confines, such as there is in Rhode Island. The railroad is part of the daily life of the people, binding them socially and industrially together, and the prosperity of the people means the prosperity of the railroad. The interest of a community in the welfare of the railroad should be as great as the reciprocal interest of the railroad in the welfare of the community.

NEW HAVEN'S INTEREST IN RHODE ISLAND The New Haven Railroad and its allied transportation interests are very much concerned in your welfare because there are 195 miles of steam railroad and 346

miles of electric road in Rhode Island owned or controlled by the New Haven. Then there are each year 2059 steamers sailing to and from Providence and 1760 to and from Newport belonging to lines in which the New Haven has an interest, and at Newport are the main repair shops of the steamship lines, employing from 400 to 700 men, a large and important plant.

To handle the business transacted in this state by these steam, electric and water lines requires the services of between 8000 and 9000 men with an annual pay roll of nearly \$6,500,000, a distribution by the transportation lines of a very considerable part of the revenues received for service performed in the state.

IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDENCE Narragansett Bay bears a most important relation to the transportation of southern New England. It is part of an inside water route for practically the entire distance to and from New York, reaching to Providence, Newport, Bristol and Pawtucket.

Some of the principal manufacturing points in southern New England are near Providence:

Attleboro	12 miles
Mansfield	19 miles
Woonsocket	16 miles
Worcester	44 miles

Lowell	69 miles
Fitchburg	78 miles
Lawrence	82 miles

The railroads connecting Providence with these places are along river valleys permitting easy grades and thus facilitating the movement of freight.

Within a 15-mile radius of Providence there are more than 500,000 busy people.

The steamship lines in conjunction with the rail lines at Providence form an outlet for commodities manufactured in New England. Inbound there is a very large coal business, 1,245,000 tons received at Providence for the year ending September 1, 1913. The position of the terminals of the steamship lines in New York City, on the North River, and adjacent to the produce commission district make them the most advantageous route for much of the eastbound traffic in food products, a goodly share of which are destined to and through Providence.

RAIL AND BOAT LINES The peculiar position of Rhode Island, bisected as it is by Narragansett Bay, suggests that transportation can be most successfully performed by the co-operation between steamboat lines terminating at Narragansett Bay points and railroads operating therefrom into the interior. Lately the question has been raised whether the common ownership and close working together of rail and water lines via Providence and other sound ports is lawful and for the best interest of New England. This question is now being studied most carefully and it needs the thoughtful consideration of those who believe that the present arrangements are helpful in promoting the movement of business via this important gateway to and from New England.

Whether any action of the company in the past was right or wrong is not now the question at issue. Moreover, should competing carriers, either rail or water, see fit to invest their capital for the purpose of adding to the transportation facilities of this region, this company is not going to fight such a movement. This company has the desire, and, under fair treatment from the public and the various law making and law administering bodies, has the ability to furnish a large quantity of transportation of a good quality.

To perform that service it is not unfair to say that it must retain the use of its own tracks, terminals and other facilities to handle its own business and that others entering the field should not cripple or reduce in efficiency the transportation machine now here and ready to serve the public, but should create its own terminals and other fa-

cilities. Terminals are to a railroad what lungs and heart are to man; take them away or congest them and the efficiency of the road is gone. Consideration should also be given to the fact that the supply of capital in the world is now unequal to the demand, and that wise public policy should not dictate the investment of capital in duplication of public service facilities except upon evidence that such investment is absolutely necessary.

URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION

Rhode Island is the most densely populated state in the Union. Its savings bank deposits are among the largest per capita. It is pre-eminently a manufacturing state, and has been so for many decades. During 1849 an average of 20,967 wage earners, representing 14.2 per cent of the total population, were employed in manufactures, while in 1909 an average of 113,538 wage earners, or 20.9 per cent of the total population, were so engaged. At the present time the urban population, numbering 524,654, comprises 96.7 per cent of the total population. Of these 122,641 persons, or nearly 23 per cent of the population are engaged in manufactures. By manufactures, according to the thirteenth census, is meant "manufacturing establishments conducted under what is known as the factory system, excluding the neighborhood, household, and hand industries." It also excludes establishments which were idle during the entire year or which had a value of products less than \$500. On the other hand, the rural population, numbering 17,956, comprised only 3.3 per cent of the total population. Of these, 5,292 were farm operators. This does not include farm laborers or members of farmers' families. The comparison between the manufacturing and agricultural activities is shown also in the comparative value of the products. The total value of all agricultural products for 1909, including products reported as produced for family consumption as well as products which were sold, and including some unavoidable duplication of the census returns on the value of farm products, amounted to only \$8,089,937. The value added to the materials of manufacture by the manufacturing industries of the state was for the same year \$122,152,000.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

With the tendency of population to collect in the cities the problem of food-supply is more and more important, and is emphasized by the rising prices of some foods, particularly meats. The necessity of starting a drift "back to the land," of pointing out to the young man and the young woman that there is a chance for a wholesome, happy life in agriculture is greater than ever before if the manu-

facturing population in the towns and cities is to be fed well at fair prices.

Successful agriculture is the basis of our prosperity. The farmer furnishes energy for the worker, whether he toil in mine or mill. And the more we impress upon the youth of our land the importance of the farmer, the more we bring home the material advantages, which can be gained today by thorough use of the soil, the more will this "back to the soil" movement be encouraged and the general welfare promoted. Here in the east, as the figures show, the cities act as great magnets, their propinquity exerting great power of attraction upon the boy and the girl, causing them to leave the soil for the shop and the factory. The return movement towards the farm has not amounted to much yet. A canvass made not long ago of the high school pupils of Rhode Island showed that only nine-tenths of one per cent intended to take up agriculture as a vocation. Why is this? Why should our young people so neglect the opportunities of the soil. Rhode Island is a manufacturing state, but the soil here is good, arable land, close to the best markets of the country where there is an incessant demand for food in all forms. This soil only needs to be intelligently worked in order to supply at a profit a considerable part of the demands of these markets. The trolley, the telephone, good roads and the cheap motor car are breaking down the barriers between the farmer and the market, just as they are removing the isolation of the farm, and making life on the farm happier for women and children. One has but to travel through the western and northwestern part of this state to see the opportunities that await the application of brains and energy to the cultivation of the soil. It is not impoverished land, and yet from here has gone on immigration to the cities, with the result that these farming communities have shown a steady decrease in population for the last fifty years,—in the case of the town of West Greenwich, as high as 61.8%, and in the case of Exeter, 55.3%. In a corresponding period manufacturing communities such as Providence and Pawtucket, have shown increases of 342.5% and 932.4%. The summer resorts and residential suburbs have also increased tremendously in population in the same period, the growth of East Providence, for example, having been 627.8%. These figures form material for interesting study (see table).

POPULATION

Taken from Rhode Island Manual 1913-14

FARMING COMMUNITIES

<i>Town</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>1910</i>	<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>
West Greenwich . .	1,258	481		777	61.8
Little Compton . . .	1,304	1,276		28	02.1
New Shoreham . . .	1,320	1,314		6	00.4
Foster	1,935	1,124		811	41.9
Gloucester	2,427	1,404		1,023	42.2
Scituate	4,251	3,493		758	17.8
Exeter	1,741	778		963	55.3
Hopkinton	2,738	2,324		414	15.1
Richmond	1,964	1,633		331	16.8
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Total	18,938	13,827		5,111	26.9

SUMMER RESORTS AND RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS

Newport	10,508	27,149	16,641	158.3
Barrington	1,000	2,452	1,452	145.2
Bristol	5,271	8,565	3,294	62.4
East Greenwich . . .	2,282	3,420	1,138	33.2
Warwick	8,916	26,629	17,713	198.6
Jamestown	400	1,175	775	193.7
Middletown	1,012	1,708	696	68.7
Portsmouth	1,833	2,681	848	30.9
Tiverton	1,927	4,032	2,105	109.2
Cranston	7,500	21,107	13,607	181.4
E. Pr'vid'ce (1865)	2,172	15,808	13,636	627.8
Johnston	3,440	5,935	2,495	72.5
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Total	46,261	120,661	74,400	160.8

MANUFACTURING

Warren	2,636	6,585	3,949	149.8
Burrillville	4,140	7,878	3,738	90.2
Cumberland	8,339	10,107	1,768	21.2
Pawtucket (1865) .	5,000	51,622	46,622	932.4
Woonsocket (1870)	11,527	38,125	26,598	236.8
Providence	50,666	224,326	173,660	342.5
Westerly	3,470	8,696	5,226	150.6
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Total	85,778	347,339	261,561	305.8

RHODE ISLAND AND BELGIUM

I asked the Bureau of Railway Economics of Washington to prepare some statistics comparing Belgium and Rhode Island. They are most interesting and instructive:

	<i>Belgium</i>	<i>Rhode Island</i>
Area square miles	11,371	1,067
Population	7,423,784	542,610
Per square mile	652.9	508.5

The last census figures for Belgium show that there were 1,102,244 persons engaged in manufacturing, or about 18 per cent of the population. But Belgium has numerous small enterprises and household industries. The extent of these is indicated by the fact that of the work-people in manufacturing, mining and other such industries, 13 per cent were occupied in their own homes. Again, of the enterprises carried on outside of the homes, over 70 per cent were conducted by the proprietors alone, without the assistance of any employes. Yet there were 682,000 work-people in the other enterprises that employed wage earners. It thus appears probable that not over 15 per cent of the population of Belgium is engaged in industries comparable to those covered by the census statistics for Rhode Island. This may be compared with 23 per cent in Rhode Island in manufacturing industries.

Yet, notwithstanding Belgium's highly developed manufacturing industry, the people have given much attention to agriculture and supply a large proportion of their own food. The last general census for agriculture was taken in 1895. In that year there were 1,204,810 persons who lived habitually by means of agriculture. This was 18.79 per cent of the population. This percentage had decreased from 21.77 per cent in 1880. These facts may be compared with the situation in Rhode Island where only 3.3 per cent of the population in 1910 was classified as rural, and not all of these are engaged in agriculture.

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

The extent to which the people of Belgium produce their own food is indicated in the following table:

PERCENTAGE OF FOOD CONSUMED¹ IN BELGIUM THAT WAS PRODUCED² IN BELGIUM, 1911.

<i>Food Commodity</i>	<i>Percentage produced in Belgium</i>
Cereal	40.63 per cent of quantity
Sugar beets	83.82 per cent of quantity
Potatoes	100.24 per cent of quantity

Forage crops	96.36 per cent of quantity
Cheese18 per cent of value
Butter	68.79 per cent of value

1. Estimated by deducting exports from the sum of imports and domestic product.

2. Based on data in the statistical annual for Belgium, 1912.

Belgium and Rhode Island are thus seen to be quite comparable with respect to their development of manufacturing, but quite unequally developed with respect to agriculture.

RHODE ISLAND AGRICULTURE The general character of Rhode Island agriculture is indicated by the fact that only 9.6% of the total value of the crops of Rhode Island in 1909 was contributed by cereals, while 33.3% was contributed by hay and forage, and 26.6% by potatoes and other vegetables, and 16.1% by flowers and plants and nursery products. The remaining nearly 14% consisted mostly of forest products and of fruits and nuts.

The leading crops, in the order of their importance in value are:

Hay and forage	\$1,310,000
Vegetables, other than potaoes	637,000
Flowers and plants	559,000
Potatoes	408,000
Corn	336,000
Orchard fruits	198,000

Fruit does not seem to have attracted the attention of the statistician and is not listed. Every one, however, knows that fruit of various kinds can be raised in Rhode Island, and it would seem that encouragement of the fruit industry would bring many a dollar to the state.

The character of agriculture is shown also in the fact that 55 out of every 100 Rhode Island farmers grow corn and 9 in every 100 grow oats, while only every 3 in 100 grow rye, and only one in every 100 grows barley. Seventy-five in every 100 raise potatoes, and 86 in every 100 grow hay and forage.

The "Rhode Island Red" is famous the country over among those who raise poultry, and this state offers ideal conditions for the chicken and egg business, as well as for all forms of dairying.

It is interesting to compare the area and production of various crops in Belgium and Rhode Island.

PERCENTAGE OF FARM AREAS

Crops	Rhode Island	Belgium
Cereal and Farinaceous	2.7	28.6
Forage Crops	13.8	10.9
Potatoes	1.	6.

COMPARATIVE CROP STATISTICS FOR RHODE ISLAND (1909) AND BELGIUM (1911)

Product	Percent- age of total farm area devoted to product		Average product per acre		Average product per capita	
	Rhode Island	Bel- gium	Rhode Island	Belgium	Rhode Island	Belgium
Barley	.04	1.29	25.7 bu.	54.65 bu.	.01 bu.	.60 bu.
Beets, forage		2.72		35,842 lbs.		939.56 lbs.
Beets, sugar		2.25		22,890 lbs		447.45 lbs.
Buckwheat	.01		15.7 bu.		.001 bu.	
Corn	2.18		41.1 bu.		.73 bu.	
Forage Crops	13.83	10.94	2,620 lbs.	5,640 lbs	300 lbs.	535.52 lbs.
Oats	.39	9.92	27.9 bu.	67.58 bu.	.09 bu.	5.83 bu.
Potatoes	1.05	6.01	118.9 bu.	260.85 bu.	1.02 bu.	13.60 bu.
Rye	.11	10.05	15.8 bu.	37.60 bu.	.01 bu.	3.28 bu.
Spelt		.73		1,817 lbs		11.46 lbs
Wheat	.002	6.19	16.0 bu.	39.51 bu.	.0003 bu.	2.12

Is there any good reason why the intelligence and energy of the people of Rhode Island should not produce as much out of the ground as the people of Belgium do? Do not these figures show that we are neglecting a most important part of state development?

NUMBER AND SIZE OF FARMS

The area of farm land in Rhode Island has decreased since 1860—while in Belgium it has remained about the same.

The average size of farms in Rhode Island was 96 acres in 1860, and 83 acres in 1910, while the variation in Belgium has been from 8.8 acres in 1860 to 7.8 acres in 1895.

In Belgium about 90% of the land area is in farms and 93.5% of that is improved—while in Rhode Island about 65% is in farms and only 40% is improved. Belgium has realized that her manufacturing supremacy require that her employes should be fed as well and as cheaply as possible, and the area of her improved farms has been increasing steadily.

Rhode Island, with the same need confronting it, has let the area of her improved farms decrease steadily. Should we not take a leaf out of Belgium's book and pay more attention to this important subject?

CO-OPERATION AND THE FARM

Why has Belgium improved her agriculture? Simply because she has paid attention to it and Rhode Island can do the same, if she gives her mind to it.

In Belgium there is much encouragement and direction from the

government. In each province there is an official Agricultural Commission, delegates from which, with specialists, form a supreme council of agriculture. The national government also contains a Ministry of Agriculture and Public Works. In the second place, there is a great deal of mutual self help by means of co-operative societies for the purchase of seed, supplies, fertilizers, farm machinery and tools, etc., co-operative credit associations, and co-operative dairies. The extent to which these have been utilized in recent years is shown by the data in the following table:

*AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS IN BELGIUM**

Agricultural Co-operative Purchasing Associations			
Year	Number	Members	Expenditures
1895	337	26,726	\$989,076
1910	1,237	73,951	\$3,526,437
1911	1,260	77,850	\$3,933,886

Co-operative Dairies			
Year	Number in Operation	Members	Value of Products
1895	69	3,501	\$624,730
1910	558	57,400	7,680,189
1911	559	57,474	7,689,516

Agricultural Co-operative Credit Associations				
Deposits and Accumulated Loans				
Year	Number	Members	Loan Capital	Outstanding
1895	33	1,160	\$54,693	\$18,417
1910	697	27,334	4,422,070	2,122,049

*Statistical Annual of Belgium, 1912, pp. XLVII-XLVIII and 222-3.

BACK TO THE FARM Rhode Island is essentially a field for intensive farming. Today the successful farmer must apply brains as well as energy to his problem and adopt advanced methods just as the successful manufacturer or transportation manager must adopt the best methods or be left behind in the race. An agricultural expert, commenting on New England's agricultural condition, has declared that here in the east it is necessary to become "soil farmers" and not "soil miners." If we can but start this back drift to the farm, if we can but bring about an infusion in these communities of new blood and brains, there is reason to believe that more than one-half of Rhode Island's uncultivated acres can be brought up to a good state of fertility, the wealth of the state increased very largely, and it be made easier to compete with the newer manufacturing districts in the south and middle west that are nearer to some of their markets than Rhode Island is. The following table comparing the size of farms in Rhode

Island and Belgium shows what a chance there is here for improved production by increasing the number of small farm units:

**COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION, BY SIZE GROUPS, OF
THE FARMS IN BELGIUM (1895*) AND
RHODE ISLAND (1900†)**

Size Group	Per Cent of Total Num- ber of Farms		Cumulative Per Cent of Total Num- ber of Farms	
	<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>Bel- gium</i>	<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>Bel- gium</i>
Not over 1 hectare (2.47 acres)		65.6		
Not over 3 acres	6.0			
Over 1 hectare, not over 4 hectares (9.88 acres)		20.7		86.3
Over 3 acres, not over 10 acres.....	9.2		15.2	
Over 4 hectares, not over 10 hectares (24.71 acres)		8.3		94.6
Over 10 acres, not over 20 acres.....	10.5		25.7	
Over 10 hectares, not over 20 hectares (49.42 acres)		3.4		98.0
Over 20 acres, not over 50 acres.....	21.3		47.0	
Over 20 hectares, not over 40 hectares (98.84 acres)		1.4		99.4
Over 50 acres, not over 100 acres....	22.8		69.8	
Over 40 hectares (98.84 acres)6		100.0
Over 100 acres	30.2		100.0	

*Based on data in the Statistical Annual of Belgium 1912.

†Based on data in the Thirteenth United States Census, Volume VII.

To have satisfactory intensive development of the farm and of the factory, there must be good transportation, permitting frequent and fairly quick service between the town and the country.

Rhode Island in this respect is as well off as Belgium—perhaps a little better. The Belgium railways provide first, second and third-class passenger accommodations. In this country people would not accept the third-class facilities furnished in Belgium. Our first and second-class accommodations are not far apart and are equal on the whole if not superior to those in Belgium.

The rates compare as follows in cents per mile:

<i>Belgium State Railways</i>			<i>R. I. Steam Railways</i>	
	<i>Single Trip</i>	<i>Round Trip</i>	<i>Single Trip and Round Trip</i>	
First class	3.05c.	2.45c.	2-2.25c.-2.50c.	
Second class	2.08c.	1.66c.	No second class	
<i>A Typical Light Railway in Belgium</i>			<i>Trolleys in Rhode Island</i>	
	<i>Single Trip</i>	<i>Round Trip</i>	<i>Single Trip and Round Trip</i>	
First class	2.32c.	1.85c.	.5c.-2c.	
Second class	1.64c.	1.32c.	Average 1.32c.	

In Belgium most of the motive power is steam. There is but little electricity even on the light railways. Moreover, these light railways have a gauge of only 39.37 inches—which does not permit as comfortable service as the 4-foot 8½-inch gauge of our trolley lines. The miles of road in the two countries—the population per mile and the square miles of area served per mile of road compare as follows:

	<i>Main Railways</i>		<i>Light Railways or Trolleys</i>		<i>All Railways</i>	
	<i>Rhode</i>		<i>Rhode</i>		<i>Rhode</i>	
	<i>Island</i>	<i>Belgium</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Belgium</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Belgium</i>
Miles	212	2907	390	2395	602	5302
Population						
per mile	2559	2554	1391	3100	901	1400
Area per mile						
in square miles	5	3.9	2.7	4.7	1.8	2.1

The passenger service furnished by the railways in the two countries compares as follows: The steam railways in Belgium furnished 21 trips of about 15 miles for each inhabitant in a year—and for Rhode Island 23 trips of nearly 20 miles.

The light railways in Belgium furnished only 2.3 trips per inhabitant, while the Rhode Island trolleys furnished more than 18 trips per inhabitant.

It is very difficult to compare the freight rates of the two countries without going into great detail—but on the whole the American rates, considering the service, compare favorably.

There is one principle of charging in Belgium that I am inclined to think must some day be adopted in this country, especially in thickly settled parts like New England, and that is this: In Belgium there is express service, meaning as in this country, freight carried on passenger trains—for this the highest rate is charged. Then there is “accelerated service” (known in France as “grand vitisse”) where freight is moved in freight trains at high rates of speed, and for which service a lower rate is charged than on passenger trains, but higher than for the slower freight service known as “petit vitisse.”

The American roads, and particularly the New England roads, have been suffering severely in their net earnings for some time past, and it does not seem unreasonable to consider the justice of charging a higher rate for “accelerated freight service” than for “slow freight service,” and that such charge could be paid without undue burden upon the public and permit an increase in earnings so much needed for the countless improvements required all the time by the New England roads.

I believe, therefore, it can be said truthfully that Rhode Island is

furnished more and better transportation than is furnished in Belgium and at rates as low or lower than theirs, and that the wages paid railway employes are much higher. The failure, therefore, to develop agriculture in the way it has been done in Belgium is not due to lack of transportation, but to other causes which I believe should receive the thoughtful consideration of all interested in the welfare of these plantations.

As in the case of the steamer lines the question has been raised by public authorities whether or not it is against the law or public policy for the New Haven Road and the trolleys to be owned as they now are and to work together as they now do.

A committee of New Haven directors is now making a careful study of the situation and is proceeding independently of the officers, so as to look at the whole matter in the broadest way. If the law or public policy demands a change in the present arrangements great care should be taken not to dislocate the service and not to cause loss to those who, in good faith, have put their money in the business. There are two sides to this question just as there are in the steamship question.

THE RHODE ISLAND PRINCIPLE

We are living in a time when there are complex problems, the solution of which taxes the energies of all. The career of Roger Williams should be an inspiration.

The community founded by him gave the most tangible evidence that here church and state were separated and that there should be toleration and fair treatment to all—no matter what their faith.

"Had the territory of the state," says the historian Bancroft, speaking of Rhode Island, "corresponded to the importance and singularity of the principles of its early existence, the world would have been filled with wonder at the phenomena of its history." But here it was that the peculiar American system of town government was initiated. What is more inspiring to us today than the language of the first written compact of these men, to subject themselves, "In active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good of the body, in an orderly way, by the major assent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together."

This was the very essence of the democracy that our land knows today. They themselves described it in their Bill of Rights, as "Democratical, that is to say, a government held by the free and voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of the free inhabitants." And they declared in the same instrument, as simply as simple men could say it, "That all men may walk as their conscience persuaded them, even in the name of God." To Rhode Island must we come then for the source of those ideas of democracy and toleration, which have had so marked effect on our national life.

CO-OPERATION, NOT CRITICISM

In the last few years there has been some severe criticism of public service corporations, and at times an apparent lack of toleration. I believe that the great majority of your citizens feel that what the country and New England needs now is not destructive criticism, but co-operation and a standing together as a unit of all of New England and of her various industries. New laws—tariff and possibly currency—are bringing new conditions. Growing states west and south are forging ahead in agriculture, manufacturing, commerce and finance. Instead of being captious and complaining, we should unite and act on the motto printed by your Board of Trade Journal in its October number:

“To those whose minds run in this way
We would suggest that *You* are *They*;
Get out and hustle, strive and hew,
They’re not to blame, it’s up to *You*.”

THE RAILROADS

The railroads are not making money; they collect and distribute money, trying to retain an interest on the amount invested which they must retain if they are to live and their service be commensurate with the growing needs of the community. They do not get the return that the manufacturer or the farmer gets, and they are getting less than they did, because, they cannot curtail expenses to meet a decreased revenue, and they have not been able to increase their prices to meet increased expenses, although they should be allowed to do this.

In the face of record gross earnings the ratio of expenses to revenues in 1912 was 68.99 as against 67.87 in 1910 and 65.37 in 1909.

The railroads cost of living has increased. In 1910, 41.58% of gross earnings went to the employees. In 1912, 44.17% went to the employees. In 1910, 3.77% went for taxes. In 1912, 4.21% went for taxes. In 1910, 7.91% went for dividends and surplus. In 1912, 4.84% went for dividends and surplus. The receipts per passenger mile in 1912 were but slightly in excess of those in 1910, being 1.991c. compared with 1.938c., while the rate per ton mile for freight carried was less, being 7.53 mills in 1910 and only 7.41 mills in 1912. It cannot be said that in America we have not the most efficient and economical machine in the world. We do more work upon our capital than is done abroad, handling 1,050,010 ton miles of freight per mile of line on a capitalization of \$61,508.00 per mile, as compared with 827,400 ton miles in Germany, where the capitalization is \$112,427.00 per mile, and 496,939 ton miles in France, where the capitalization is \$144,683.00 per mile. Thus we have here the most effi-

cient transportation machine in the world, and the railroad employe, upon whose loyalty and earnest efforts this great machine of ours depends for its efficiency, gets here on an average of \$2.23 per day to \$1.35 in England and \$.81 in Germany. While our cost of living for the railroad employe is but 38% higher than the cost of living in England, as shown by the investigation of the English Board of Trade, his wages are 60% better.

A new management has come with the New Haven road. It desires to serve the public—the employes—the stockholders as well as it possibly can—and it asks the help of all loyal New Englanders. The problem just now is a difficult one—but with hearty and unselfish co-operation of all, it should be solved. You have a director of the New Haven living here, Mr. Robert W. Taft. I know from personal contact with him how anxious and willing he is to do all he can to help the Company and the country it serves. Feeling that Rhode Island should have not only a representative in the Board—but also on the Executive Committee, Mr. Taft was elected a member of that Committee on Wednesday, October 22. So that Committee now has two from Massachusetts, one from Rhode Island, three from Connecticut, two from New York, one from Philadelphia, and myself, who, while living in Boston, will try to represent the interests of all the states. Those who have business with the railroad do not meet the higher officers of the Company frequently because of the multitude of transactions. It is, however, the desire of the Company to have good men on guard at every place and to encourage them to be courteous, prompt and efficient in their dealings with the public. On this part of the railroad you have:

J. D. Gallary, Superintendent, Providence Division, N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R.; George E. Woodward, General Agent, Freight Department, N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R.; J. P. Thorndike, Agent, Passenger Department, N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R.; J. C. Sweeney, Attorney, N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R.; A. T. Potter, Vice-President, R. I. Trolleys; D. F. Sherman, Vice President, R. I. Trolleys; N. W. Smith, General Counsel, R. I. Trolleys; A. E. Potter, General Manager, R. I. Trolleys—all of whom live in Providence.

These gentlemen, the officers of the Company and the directors are anxious to give hearty co-operation and help in working out the problems that confront the development of the state and of the transportation lines in the state.

There is needed all the time in this country a thoughtful public sentiment based on accurate knowledge of the real facts. The complicated industrial problems that confront us cannot be settled by preju-

dice, excitement and notions, based on a superficial examination of the situation.

With the exercise of common sense, and with that spirit of toleration shown by Roger Williams, let us press on toward the goal, believing that this transportation question and other problems affecting our growth as a state and a Nation will be solved to our mutual advantage, and let us always say in meeting one another, as Roger Williams did to the Indians, "What cheer."

